

purpose and length of the trip, and shall submit such request directly to the Chairman.

(2) Committee Staff Requests. Committee Staff requesting authorization for such travel shall state the purpose and length of the trip, and shall submit such request through their supervisors to the staff director and the Chairman.

(c) Notification to Members.

(1) Generally. Members shall be notified of all foreign travel of Committee Staff not accompanying a Member.

(2) Content. All Members are to be advised, prior to the commencement of such travel, of its length, nature, and purpose.

(d) Trip Reports.

(1) Generally. A full report of all issues discussed during any travel shall be submitted to the Chief Clerk of the Committee within a reasonable period of time following the completion of such trip.

(2) Availability of Reports. Such report shall be:

(A) available for the review of any Member or Committee Staff; and

(B) considered executive session material for purposes of these rules.

(e) Limitations on Travel.

(1) Generally. The Chairman is not authorized to permit travel on Committee business of Committee Staff who have not satisfied the requirements of subsection (d) of this rule.

(2) Exception. The Chairman may authorize Committee Staff to travel on Committee business, notwithstanding the requirements of subsections (d) and (e) of this rule—

(A) at the specific request of a Member of the Committee; or

(B) in the event there are circumstances beyond the control of the Committee Staff hindering compliance with such requirements.

(f) Definitions. For purposes of this rule the term "reasonable period of time" means:

(1) no later than 60 days after returning from a foreign trip; and

(2) no later than 30 days after returning from a domestic trip.

(C) DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

(a) Generally. The Committee shall immediately consider whether disciplinary action shall be taken in the case of any member of the Committee Staff alleged to have failed to conform to any rule of the House of Representatives or to these rules.

(b) Exception. In the event the House of Representatives is:

(1) in a recess period in excess of 3 days; or

(2) has adjourned sine die; the Chairman of the full Committee, in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may take such immediate disciplinary actions deemed necessary.

(c) Available Actions. Such disciplinary action may include immediate dismissal from the Committee Staff.

(d) Notice to Members. All Members shall be notified as soon as practicable, either by facsimile transmission or regular mail, of any disciplinary action taken by the Chairman pursuant to subsection (b).

(e) Reconsideration of Chairman's Actions. A majority of the Members of the full Committee may vote to overturn the decision of the Chairman to take disciplinary action pursuant to subsection (b).

18. BROADCASTING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Whenever any hearing or meeting conducted by the Committee is open to the public, a majority of the Committee may permit that hearing or meeting to be covered, in whole or in part, by television broadcast, radio broadcast, and still photography, or by any of such methods of coverage, sub-

ject to the provisions and in accordance with the spirit of the purposes enumerated in the Rules of the House.

19. COMMITTEE RECORDS TRANSFERRED TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

(a) Generally. The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(b) Notice of Withholding. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the full Committee for a determination of the question of public availability on the written request of any Member of the Committee.

20. CHANGES IN RULES

(a) Generally. These rules may be modified, amended, or repealed by vote of the full Committee.

(b) Notice of Proposed Changes. A notice, in writing, of the proposed change shall be given to each Member at least 48 hours prior to any meeting at which action on the proposed rule change is to be taken.

ENCOURAGING PEACE TALKS IN SRI LANKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to encourage a new round of peace talks between the Sri Lankan Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, LTTE, also known as the Tamil Tigers. Recent conciliatory actions by the Sri Lankan Government, as well as strong international support for peace, offers progress in finding a resolution to this conflict. However, the Tamil Tigers need to be encouraged to return to the negotiating table in order to continue this momentum towards peace.

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Sri Lanka, Mr. Speaker, is a nation that has suffered a tremendous loss of nearly 65,000 lives due to a long-standing conflict between Sri Lankans and the Tamil Tigers. Finally, on February 22nd of last year, the Norwegian Government brokered a cease-fire signed by both groups, but the peace process remains far from complete.

Excluded from a preliminary conference held in Washington this April, the Tamil Tigers then withdrew from participating in the Tokyo Donor Conference that is currently taking place. However, recent developments on the part of the Sri Lankan Government and the international community offer some progress. On Monday, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka offered a provisional administrative structure for the Tamil majority region of the island, a step toward meeting a central demand of the Tamil Tigers for resuming peace talks.

The Tigers have said they would return to the negotiating table only if an interim administration in the Tamil-majority north and east was established, and the Prime Minister's proposal does just that. Having taken this important step, the Prime Minister must further lay out a more specific outline for addressing the Tamil Tigers' concerns.

The movement towards peace in Sri Lanka is further solidified by the vast influx of international support for peace on the island. At the Donor meeting in Tokyo, host Japan has already pledged \$1 billion in assistance. Another \$1 billion has been offered by the Asian Development Bank, and a spokesman for the European Union said it will contribute \$290 million over the next 3 years. The U.S. has committed to \$54 million in aid, and the World Bank recently announced before the conference that it would provide Sri Lanka with \$200 million a year for 4 years.

Mr. Speaker, these donations show an enormous interest by the international community in rebuilding postconflict Sri Lanka and finding a peaceful resolution. Any aid will come with strict conditions in an effort to provide the international community with the ability to compel the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil Tigers to move quickly toward resolving their conflict.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say the atmosphere for peace in Sri Lanka, I think, is right. Strong international financial and moral support for peace, and recent Sri Lankan compromises to the Tamil Tigers will hopefully lead to the Tamil Tigers' return to the negotiating table and, hopefully, eventually lead to a peaceful resolution in Sri Lanka.

REVISIONS TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2004 BUDGET RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with section 507 of H. Con. Res. 95 and consistent with section 310 of the Congressional Budget Act, I submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revisions to the fiscal year 2004 budget resolution to reflect the enactment of H.R. 2, the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-27).

Section 201 of the budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) directed the Committee on Ways and Means to report a bill that would increase outlays and reduce revenue by specified amounts. The conference report accompanying H.R. 2 exceeded the target for outlays, but reduced revenue by less than the amount allowed under the revenue target.

Since the overage in outlays was within 20 percent of the total cost of the bill and was offset on the revenue side, as permitted under section 310 of the Budget Act, the conference report was deemed to be in compliance with its reconciliation instructions.

I am, therefore, adjusting the 302(a) allocation to the Committee on Ways and Means to

reflect the enacted levels of budget authority, outlays and revenue in the tax bill. This will hold other measures assumed in the budget resolution harmless for the permissible variance in budget authority and revenue between the budget resolution and enacted tax bill.

Accordingly, the adjusted 302(a) allocation to the Committee on Ways and Means is as follows:

Fiscal year 2003: \$14,576,000,000 in new budget authority and \$14,512,000,000 in outlays.

Fiscal year 2004: \$20,626,000,000 in new budget authority and \$20,054,000,000 in outlays.

The period of fiscal years 2004–2008: \$24,079,000,000 in new budget authority and \$23,876,000,000 in outlays.

The period of fiscal years 2004–2013: \$39,261,000,000 in new budget authority and \$39,128,000,000 in outlays.

The changes in the Ways and Means allocation cause changes in the budgetary aggregates. Accordingly, I also modify the budgetary aggregates to the following levels:

Fiscal year 2003: \$1,877,204,000 in new budget authority and \$1,829,299,000 in outlays; \$1,310,347,000 in revenues.

Fiscal year 2004: \$1,880,555,000 in new budget authority and \$1,903,502,000 in outlays.

The period of fiscal years 2004–2013: \$19,632,020,000,000 in revenues.

Questions may be directed to Dan Kowalski at 67270.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BUSH ADMINISTRATION STRIPS VETERANS' BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, these are difficult days for our country. The war is not over. We continue to have young Americans killed, almost on a daily basis in Iraq, and that country is very unsettled. But that is not why I rise to speak tonight. I rise to speak about soldiers of wars passed.

Just this past weekend in Marietta, Ohio, I attended a meeting of the Purple Heart Association; and later on that evening I spoke to a group of veterans who had served on the LST ships, those large ships that transported cargo and goods and soldiers, landing them on the beaches of Normandy and elsewhere; and I was struck by the fact that these veterans are full of goodwill and wonderful stories about their lives as members of the United States Armed Forces. They went through some hellish experiences, things that we can only imagine, I guess, in our darkest moments.

But I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, that this country, as rich as we are and

as willing as we are to take care of the well-off among us, that this country is failing to live up to its obligations to our Nation's veterans. I would just like to share some of the actions that have been recently taken by the President and this administration that I think are so harmful to veterans.

Approximately a year and a half or so ago, the VA made a decision that they were going to increase the cost of a prescription drug that a veteran would have to pay from \$2 a prescription to \$7 a prescription, and I thought that was outrageous at the time, and I introduced legislation to roll back that decision. But the matter has gotten worse. In the President's budget which he sent to us a few months ago, in fact, the budget that he sent to us in January at the very time when we were preparing to send our young men and women into harm's way in Iraq, the President sent us a budget that asked that the cost of a prescription drug be increased, the copayment, not at \$7, but that that be increased up to \$15 a prescription. I felt like that was a shameful act. But the President also asked in his budget that the cost of a clinic visit be increased from \$15 to \$20. The President asked in his budget that there be an annual enrollment fee of \$250 imposed upon Priority 7 and 8 veterans. It just seems as if it does not stop.

Then, Secretary Principi created a new priority group of veterans, which is now known as Priority Group 8, and these are veterans who do not have service-connected disabilities and are considered higher-income veterans. So the decision was made that these Priority 8 veterans simply could no longer enroll in the VA health care system. Now, how much money does one have to make in order to be considered a higher-income Priority 8 veteran? Well, in my district and in other parts of the country, one can make as little as \$22,000 a year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those of us who serve in this Chamber make over \$150,000 a year, and maybe we just cannot understand what it is like to make \$22,000 a year. Maybe we just think if one makes \$22,000 a year, one is going to have all one needs to pay their bills and support their families and so on. But, quite frankly, I think it is shameful that at a time when we are giving huge tax breaks to the richest among us, that we would impose a \$250 annual enrollment fee on veterans who have honorably served this Nation, whose incomes are as little as \$22,000 a year.

Well, I do not know what the solution is. I know some of my colleagues in this Chamber say, well, we are never going to have these requests that the President has made passed into law; but just this week, I am on the Committee on Veterans Affairs, and just this week we had representatives from the Veterans Affairs Department before our committee. And I asked them if it was current administration policy to pursue these efforts to increase the

cost of prescription drugs to impose an annual enrollment fee on veterans, and to exclude Priority 8 veterans from even participation in the VA system. I was told that it continues to be the intention of this administration of the President to pursue these efforts.

There is something else I would like to mention tonight. About a year or so ago, the VA put out a memo to all of its health care providers around the country, a memo which consists of, in my judgment, little more than a gag order. The memo basically said, and I am certainly paraphrasing, but what I am saying is true to the spirit of the memo, the memo said: too many veterans are coming in for service. We do not have enough money to provide those services, and so you are no longer able to actively pursue the dissemination of information to our veterans.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are troublesome things, and I would just ask that my colleagues in this Chamber rethink the direction in which we are going.

THE NEW APOLLO ENERGY PROJECT: A BOLD NEW ENERGY POLICY FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I have come to the House Chamber tonight to talk about a tremendous opportunity for our great country, and it is an opportunity that follows in the historical path that John Kennedy set forth back on May 9, 1961. The path that I would like to talk about tonight is a path towards a new energy future for our country, a future that is befitting of this century and our technological progress and achievements we have made and can make in the next decade or two.

What we are going to be introducing for the House consideration in the next week or two is what we call the New Apollo Energy Project, because many of my colleagues and myself believe that our country deserves a bold, vigorous, aggressive new energy policy that is befitting of the technological wherewithal and talents of our country. So we are calling it the New Apollo Energy Project.

The reason we are calling it the New Apollo Energy Project is because we think that we need to follow in the footsteps of what John F. Kennedy did in challenging America right behind us. He came to this Chamber on May 9, 1961 as a young President, way back before computers, biotechnologies, solar cells, fuel cells; and he stood behind me and looked out to America and challenged America to put a man on the Moon within the decade, which was an extraordinary challenge to America in 1961. Computers were in their infancy, our rocketry was failing repeatedly at that time. At that moment, people